

Message Text

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FOR CARTER FROM PA

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SUBJECT: PRESS MATERIAL

1. HEREWITH FULL TEXT ROY REED BY-LINER NEW YORK TIMES
TUESDAY, AUGUST 8, HEADED "BRITAIN AND U.S. CONSIDER PLANS
FOR RHODESIAN RESCUE."
2. LONDON - THE BRITISH AND AMERICAN GOVERNMENTS HAVE BEGUN
SEPARATE, LOW-LEVEL STUDIES OF A VARIETY OF PLANS TO RESCUE
WHITE AND BLACK RHODESIANS WHO MIGHT BE TRAPPED IF ORDER
THERE SHOULD COLLAPSE.
3. THE UNITED STATES WOULD PROBABLY JOIN SUCH A RESCUE
OPERATION ONLY IF IT WAS CLEARLY HUMANITARIAN AND NON-
POLITICAL IN NATURE. IT IS HIGHLY UNLIKELY THAT AMERICAN
TROOPS WOULD BE INVOLVED. ALTHOUGH THERE IS A STRONG FEEL-
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ING IN BOTH GOVERNMENTS THAT IT IS TOO EARLY TO MAKE
DETAILED, HIGH-LEVEL RESCUE PLANS, THE PROBLEM HAS SOME
URGENCY HERE -- MORE THAN IN THE UNITED STATES -- BECAUSE
THOUSANDS OF BRITISH CITIZENS HAVE FAMILY OR BUSINESS TIES
IN RHODESIA.

4. THE FOLLOWING CONCLUSIONS COME FROM CONVERSATIONS WITH

BRITISH AND AMERICAN SOURCES WHO CANNOT BE IDENTIFIED BUT WHO ARE CLOSE TO THE SITUATION:

5. THERE ARE A NUMBER OF RESCUE PLANS ON PAPER, BUT THEY ARE MOSTLY THEORETICAL MILITARY EXERCISES ON THE TECHNICAL PROBLEMS OF HOW TO MEET VARIOUS EMERGENCIES. THEY DEAL WITH SUCH OPERATIONS AS AIRLIFTS AND MOVING PEOPLE TO SAFETY BY HIGHWAY.

6. NO FIRM, DETAILED PLANS HAVE BEEN APPROVED AT HIGH LEVEL IN EITHER WASHINGTON OR LONDON, AND THERE IS NO OFFICIAL LIAISON ON THE PROBLEM BETWEEN THE TWO GOVERNMENTS.

7. BRITISH NEWSPAPERS HAVE CARRIED MANY RECENT REPORTS ON THE FORMULATION OF PLANS TO SAVE TRAPPED RHODESIANS. THE EMPHASIS HAS BEEN ON THE FATE OF THE 250,000 WHITES.

8. THE UNOFFICIAL BUT FIRM RESPONSE IN BOTH THE AMERICAN AND THE BRITISH GOVERNMENTS IS THAT THOSE REPORTS HAVE BEEN OVERBLOWN BECAUSE THEY SUGGEST THAT THE COLLAPSE OF THE RHODESIAN GOVERNMENT IS IMMINENT AND THAT OUTSIDE RESCUE PLANS ARE FAR ADVANCED.

9. ALONG WITH OBVIOUS MILITARY AND TECHNICAL PROBLEMS, RESCUE PLANNING RAISES SEVERAL TOUGH POLITICAL QUESTIONS. ONE OF THE MORE NETTLESOME IS JUST WHO WOULD BE ELIGIBLE FOR RESCUE. DR. DAVID OWEN, THE BRITISH FOREIGN SECRETARY, UNCLASSIFIED

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MADE IT CLEAR LAST WEEK THAT THE LABOR GOVERNMENT WOULD BE COLOR-BLIND IN THAT REGARD.

10. DR. OWEN SAID IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS THAT A DANGEROUS SITUATION MIGHT BE DEVELOPING IN RHODESIA AND THAT THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT WAS MAKING CONTINGENCY PLANS TO AVOID "A TRAGIC LOSS OF BLACK AND WHITE LIVES." BUT HE ADDED THE CAUTIONARY NOTE THAT THERE HAD BEEN "A SLIGHT TENDENCY OVER THE PAST FEW WEEKS TO BE TOO CATAclySMIC ABOUT THE IMMEDIATE FUTURE." THAT FEELING IS ECHOED BY AMERICAN OFFICIALS.

11. ABOUT 155,000 RHODESIANS HOLD BRITISH PASSPORTS OR HAVE FAMILY TIES THAT GIVE THEM THE RIGHT TO LIVE HERE. THE GREAT MAJORITY ARE WHITE.

12. AMONG THE NEARLY 100,000 WHITES WHO HAVE NO DIRECT BRITISH CONNECTION ARE 10,000 TO 12,000 SOUTH AFRICANS. WOULD THEY BE RESCUED? WOULD THE BRITISH OR THE AMERICAN GOVERNMENT TRY TO SAVE THE LIVES OF WHITE RHODESIAN SOLDIERS WHO MIGHT BE TRAPPED IN REAR-GUARD ACTIONS? SUCH QUESTIONS WOULD HAVE TO BE ANSWERED AT TOP LEVELS OF GOVERN-

MENT.

13. IT IS CONSIDERED UNLIKELY THAT ANYWHERE NEAR THE CURRENT WHITE POPULATION WOULD STILL BE IN RHODESIA IF THE SITUATION BECAME DESPERATE. LARGE NUMBERS WOULD LIKELY LEAVE BEFORE THEN.

14. THERE IS ALSO THE FEELING THAT SOUTH AFRICA WOULD PROBABLY START A RESCUE OPERATION OF ITS OWN, WITH WHATEVER TROOPS IT THOUGHT NECESSARY, SHOULD WHITE RHODESIANS BE SERIOUSLY THREATENED.

15. LONDON IS INCREASINGLY PESSIMISTIC ABOUT RHODESIA. MANY NOW EXPECT INTENSIFIED CIVIL STRIFE, EVEN THOUGH THE UNCLASSIFIED

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LABOR GOVERNMENT CONTINUES TO PRESS FOR A PEACEFUL SETTLEMENT THROUGH THE DEVICE OF A CONFERENCE OF ALL PARTIES TO THE DISPUTE, INCLUDING PRIME MINISTER IAN D. SMITH, THE THREE BLACK MODERATES WITH WHOM HE HAS FORMED A TRANSITIONAL GOVERNMENT AND THE LEADERS OF THE PATRIOTIC FRONT GUERRILLA ALLIANCE.

16. RHODESIA SEEMS LIKELY TO BECOME AN ISSUE IN BRITAIN'S GENERAL ELECTIONS, WHICH COULD BE HELD IN OCTOBER. IT WILL BE DIFFICULT FOR THE CONSERVATIVES TO EXPLOIT, HOWEVER, BECAUSE THEY ARE SHARPLY DIVIDED.

17. RIGHT-WINGERS SUCH AS WINSTON CHURCHILL, THE GRANDSON OF THE LATE PRIME MINISTER, ARE PRESSING FOR AN END TO SANCTIONS AGAINST RHODESIA. THEY SEE THE QUESTION IN MUCH THE SAME TERMS AS AMERICAN CONSERVATIVES -- THAT THE GOVERNMENT HEADED BY MR. SMITH IS BIRACIAL AND A BULWARK AGAINST COMMUNIST EXPANSION IN AFRICA.

18. MODERATE TORIES, SUCH AS JOHN DAVIES, ARE MORE CAUTIOUS. WHILE MEMBERS OF THE RIGHT WING URGE BRITAIN TO SUPPORT THE INTERNAL AGREEMENT UNDER WHICH RHODESIA IS NOW GOVERNED, MR. DAVIES -- WHO IS THE PARTY'S LEADING SPOKESMAN ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND THE MAN WHO WOULD LIKELY BECOME FOREIGN SECRETARY IF THE PARTY WON IN OCTOBER -- WARNS THAT THE TORIES SHOULD NOT ALIGN THEMSELVES WITH A TEMPORARY GOVERNING ARRANGEMENT THAT SEEMS LIKELY TO FAIL FROM LACK OF POPULAR SUPPORT. END TEXT CHRISTOPHER

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